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have left out much that has been said; and his book will, in the long run, be appraised, not on its own grounds, but from the standpoint of an interpretation whose terms are valid at once for modern science, philosophy, and theology.

We feel quite confident in predicting that Dr. Orr's book will not evoke a library of controversial volumes in defense of the extreme criticism which he attacks; for we believe that the biblical scholarship of today is about to enter new territory. We are far from expecting that what we have said here will change the opinions of the able author of *The Problem of the Old Testament*. But if we succeed in convincing him that the biblical material can be handled from a standpoint of which his book takes no account, we shall not, perhaps, have spoken in vain.

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THE SYNTAX OF I COR. 7:18, 27

The crisp interrogatives used by Paul in I Cor. 7:27, "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife"—are obviously vigorous substitutes for conditional clauses which would have been more formal and doubtless less effective. A similar form of sentence occurs in 7:18 and in James 5:3, while I Cor. 7:21 exhibits one element of the construction. Professor Blass has found parallel sentences in the practical writings of the Greek orators, and properly questions whether it is necessary to treat the first clauses as really interrogative, save perhaps in origin.¹

The informal, perhaps even colloquial, character of these constructions is freshly evidenced by a third-century letter from Tebtunis recently published. This letter is an urgent message to a certain Didymus, informing him that his sister is ill and bidding him come without delay. In the course of a dozen short lines, the writer, Apion, directs Didymus to dispose of a certain turquoise tunic, in language precisely parallel in syntax to Paul's. The context will show the hasty tone of the letter.

Ἀπίων Διδύμῳ χαίρειν. πάντα
ὑπερθέμενος ἐξαυτῆς ἅμα τῷ
λαβεῖν σε ταῦτα μου τὰ γράμματα
γένου πρὸς ἐμὲ ἐπεὶ ἡ ἀδελφή σου
νοθεύεται. καὶ τὸ κιτῶνιον
αὐτῆς τὸ λευκὸν τὸ παρά σοι ἔνι-
γον ἔρχ[ε]ται μὲν τὸ δὲ καλλαῖνον

¹ Blass, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, p. 302.

² *Tebtunis Papyri*, II, No. 421.

μ[ῆ] ἐνίγκης, ἀλλὰ θέλεις³ αὐτὸ πωλῆ-
 σα[ι] πώλησον, θέλεις³ αὐτὸ ἀφείναι
 τῇ θυγατρὶ σ[ου] ἄφες. ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀμελή-
 σης τι αὐτῆς [κ]αὶ μὴ σκύλης τὴν
 γ[υνα]ῖκα σου ἢ τὰ παιδία, ἐρχόμε-
 ν[ο]ς δὲ ἔρχου ἰς Θεογονίδα.
 ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὖχομαι.

Apion to Didymus, greeting. Put off everything, and come to me immediately upon receiving this letter of mine, as your sister is sick. And when you come, bring the white tunic of hers that you have, but the turquoise one do not bring; but if you wish to sell it, sell it; if you wish to let your daughter have it, do so. But do not neglect her in any way, and do not trouble your wife or children, and when you come, come to Theogonis. I pray for your good health.

This is clearly an intimate personal communication, of a thoroughly informal character, and the curious double conditional interrogative is plainly a well-understood colloquial ellipsis. If we may argue from the third century to the first, it bears fresh witness to the rapid, informal, sometimes even colloquial character of Paul's style. At all events, it supplies a striking syntactical parallel for an idiom somewhat unusual in Greek writings. Does it not further suggest that the originally interrogative clauses in these sentences, from being only logically subordinate, have become grammatically so, that is, that in writing *δέδεσαι*, *λέλυσαι*, and *θέλεις*, Paul and Apion were conscious of no rhetorical use of interrogative for conditional, but only of employing the most concise conditional mechanism known to them?

The use of *ἐρχόμενος* with *ἔρχου* in the last lines of the letter at once recalls the Hebrew infinitive absolute construction, used to express frequency or emphasis, which appears in Hebraistic Greek under such a variety of forms. Thus understood, it would mean: "By all means come to Theogonis." Yet there is no clear hint that the writer was a Jew, and here and in the other construction Hebrew influence is hardly to be invoked.

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³ Papyrus has *θελεις*.